

The Wharfinger

**Newsletter of the
Herefordshire and
Gloucestershire
Canal Trust**



**Edition 55 • Autumn 1997
50p – free to members**

WHO DOES WHAT...

VICE PRESIDENTS

Viscount Portman

R. E. Barnes TD, Sir John Knill Bt.

CHAIRPERSON

Bryan Heatley

VICE CHAIRMEN

Brian Fox, Tom Bennett

FINANCE:-

Treasurer/Chairman
Committee

Liz Connors

Brian Fox, Tom Bennett,

David Penny, Nigel Jefferies

RESTORATION:-

Gloucestershire

Steve Delacourt-Smith, *Simon Hayward, Ray Moses*

Herefordshire
Plant & Training Manager

Brian Fox, Mike Potts, Tom Bennett
Tom Bennett

SPECIAL PROJECTS:-

Chairman

Peter Moore

[Oxenhall Locks Site]

Vice-Chair

David Penny

Secretary

Steve Gittins

Committee

Richard Hamblin, Bill Cronin (FoDDC),

Steve Delacourt-Smith, Paul Johnson,

Shawn Price, Roger Tutt, Alan Lines,

Simon Hayward, Steve Lambert

Steve Gittins

HEALTH & SAFETY OFFICER

David Penny

LOCAL AUTHORITY LIAISON

PLANNING LIAISON

David Penny, Cliff Penny

LANDOWNER LIAISON

Brian Fox

PRESS/PUBLICITY:-

Social/H&GCS Events

Elizabeth Lloyd

MEMBERSHIP:-

Secretary

Nigel Jefferies

Covenants

Liz Connors

FUNDRAISING

David Penny, Bryan Heatley

SOCIAL:-

Events

Steve Delacourt-Smith

Outings

Mike Potts, *Joyce Potts*

MINUTES SECRETARY

Tony Austin-Bailey

IWA NOMINATED MEMBER

Will Frecknall

THE WHARFINGER:-

Editor

Cliff Penny, David Penny

Postmasters:- Leader

B & M Sanderson & family

Team

D & M Gray; I & F Roper;

TALKS/WALKS

Nigel Jefferies, Mike Potts

Those in italics are not Directors on the Council of Management, although they may be co-opted members

THE TRADING COMPANY
H & G CANAL [SALES]

H & G
C & G

DONATING ALL PROFITS
TO THE CANAL TRUST

TREASURER/MANNING

Liz Connors

EXHIBITIONS CO-ORDINATOR

Steve Hughes

BOAT GROUP REPRESENTATIVE

Derek Gray

MAIL ORDER SALES

Penny Shetliffe

CRAFT FAIRS

Joyce Potts

LOGISTICS GROUP

Steve Hughes, Chris & Mark Blunden, Steve Gittins

BOATS:- Chairman

Dick Skeet

Committee

Ray & Barbara Moses, Pat Skeet, Derek Gray

Please see **CONTACTS**, inside back cover, for addresses/phone numbers.

HONORARY POSTS:-

AUDITOR Davies, Edwards & Co., Leominster.

SOLICITOR

Sue Newbould, GABB & CO., 25 King Street, Hereford.

Editorial

At the AGM we were pleased to be able to announce the appointment of our new Chairman, Bryan Heatley, who briefly introduces himself on page 6. Many months ago it became obvious that we needed to look further afield than just those who were active within the Trust to find a new Chairman. Brian Fox quietly gave himself the challenge of finding someone, and approached a voluntary body that specifically 'headhunts' retired executives for roles in the voluntary sector. Bryan Heatley responded and met with Officers of the Trust at the start of the year and 'shadowed' us for a short period, before agreeing to take on the role shortly before the AGM. Bryan has excellent contacts and experience as Chairman of the Transport Trust and we are sure will be an asset to the Trust in the exciting period we are entering.

We promised in the last Edition that there would be some further exciting news at the AGM. Thanks to an approach by Tony Austin-Bailey we were very pleased to announce that Viscount Portman, who has a 3,000 acre estate in Herefordshire, has agreed to become a Vice President of the Canal Trust. We hope to publish a short article about Viscount Portman in a future edition of *The Wharfinger*.

THE PRESENT

The biggest item of news on the ground has been the purchase of a Bailey type bridge which was installed across the aqueduct at Oxenhall in July [see page 14]. Thanks to the very generous support of the company that sold us the bridge (who do not wish publicity) it cost us £1,000 + VAT, despite

having been valued at in excess of £10,000. In addition to the 5 bay bridge that we have erected we have also bought the 'launch nose', which is used to put it up or take it down, and this could if required be used as a second 2 bay bridge. In total the 9 bays span some 90ft! We are the first Canal Trust in the country to own our own 'Bailey' bridge, and this essential asset will have already seen active service by the time you read this. [Photo's on page 5/11/17.]

The summer has seen further major progress on the area around the Lock and Lock Cottage which Brian reports on page 14. The second week of August will see one the most exciting periods of the year to date with the formal commencement of the restoration of House Lock. The objective of the week is to focus on the top and bottom ends of the Lock and to complete as much of these as possible. If you have not visited the site for a couple of months, you will get a bit of a shock if you visit it now!

THE FUTURE

We reported in the last edition that the shortlist of 5 Consultants to undertake the detailed Reports on the whole 34 miles of Canal had been reduced to the final 2. Shortly afterwards the Consultants Project Management Sub-Committee of the Steering Committee unanimously agreed to award the contract to Parkman although Symonds Travers Morgan came a very close second. Parkman are a highly experienced international firm of Consultants with whom the Trust did battle when they represented the Department of Transport for the proposed A40 through Newent.

Editorial

Now we hope they will be somewhat more welcomed by the locals! Although not formally appointed as yet, due to applications for funding for additional works, Parkman are already engaged on some urgent advanced works to ensure that the Trust can maximise the potential of the opportunities that are currently available to us. We will include a full report in The Wharfinger once they are formally appointed.

Some of the behind the scenes work not only has to remain confidential if it is to succeed, but also can take many years to come to fruition. One of these areas is liaison with developers, their agents, Local Authorities and others who may have an interest in a proposed development. Too often the first the Trust knows about a development is

when we are consulted on it by the Local Authority. However, there are two examples we can now report where all parties are *working with the Trust* to secure a development proposal that fully meets our requirements and which we can formally support when it is considered by the relevant Planning Committee. The first of these has been the subject of 6 years work (that is six - not a typographical error!) and is not home and dry as yet. The latter has been the subject of intense negotiations for the whole of this year, although we first became involved in the site a couple of years ago.

GLOUCESTERSHIRE

Earlier in the year a Planning Application for housing at the Over

E. B. HAYWARD & Co.

We are a family run business established 35 years ago, specialising in sheetmetal work and fabrications in most metals including mild steel, stainless steel, aluminium, titanium and brass.

Items can be manufactured to your own drawings and/or from instructions, in quantities from 1 to 10,000 off and can range from the size of a washer right up to fabrications of 1 tonne.

We have a wide client base with particular involvement in the hydraulic press, concrete, materials handling, feed and flour milling industries.

It has been our pleasure to support the Herefordshire and Gloucestershire Canal Trust for over 4 years, and we will continue to *work together in the present, to revive the past, and secure a better future.*

For further details please
contact Simon Hayward -
Tel: 01452 700384
Fax: 01452 700740



SHEETMETAL WORKS
ASHLEWORTH
GLOUCESTER
GL19 4JJ

Editorial

Hospital site was rejected by Tewkesbury Borough Council *against the recommendation of their Officers*. The long running saga continues, however, as this Application is subject to an Appeal in October. In the meantime another Planning Application for housing has been lodged (with prior consultation of the Canal Trust by the Applicants) in July. This again will result in significant Planning Gain for the Canal Trust if approved by Tewkesbury Borough Council, although not as much as the previous Application due to the additional costs the developer has been put to as a result of the Council's rejection of the earlier proposals. It will still, however, result in the Trust gaining ownership of a significant area of land (including a section of Canal restored at the developer's expense) and the Lock Cottage which will have been restored by the developer to a state where it is ready for internal conversion into the Trust's first interpretive centre and shop, with a manager's flat above.

The revised Application is carefully designed to overcome the Council's objections to the impact of the earlier housing proposals, and we hope that the Council will not lose this major opportunity to secure the restoration of this key length of Canal at a developer's expense, and the transfer of these assets to the Canal Trust.

The Gloucester Citizen correctly reported on its front page in July that the site could well be used for a sex offenders rehabilitation centre if the current Application (or later Appeal) is not approved. This would not require Planning Consent as it is a continuation of an existing

class of use and therefore the local population would have no say in whether they wish such a development, and the Canal Trust would be highly unlikely to be able to secure the opportunities that currently exist.

We therefore need YOU to write (before 10th September) to:-

*Andrew Winstone,
Planning Department,
Tewkesbury Borough Council,
Council Offices,
Gloucester Road,
Tewkesbury,
Gloucestershire, GL20 5TT,*

making clear your support for this quality housing development due to the very major contribution it will make to the restoration of the Canal.

You, our Members and supporters, won the battle with Forest of Dean District Council with your hundreds of letters of support for a stronger Local Plan Policy, now we need you again - your action can directly result in the restoration of a key length of Canal and secure a deal worth a six figure sum.

HEREFORDSHIRE

Over is not the only area active on the planning front. In Hereford extensive negotiations have been progressing for many months with a developer, landowners agent, Hereford City Council, Hereford & Worcester Highways Department, and others, with regard to a key site in the centre of the City. Originally the proposed development would have totally obstructed the Canal making it impossible for it to ever reach the centre of the City again.

Editorial

After many redesigns (there have been at least 5 in one month alone!) which have resulted in significant compromises by all parties, a route for the Canal has been achieved with the Canal becoming a key feature across the front of the site. The developer is now working closely with the Canal Trust and we look forward to a Planning Application being submitted shortly which we anticipate will have the full support of the Trust.

Due to the Trust's close involvement with both the developer and the City Council we are pleased to have been able to remove areas of potential conflict between us and other bodies before they had a chance to arise. One of these situations has not only resulted in a proposal being accepted that will meet the City's requirements, but also saves the developer a considerable sum over some other options that were under discussion. In the longer term it also helps to secure the route to the north of the site, whilst preserving the setting of the Canal to the south! This clearly demonstrates how the Trust can work as a partner in bringing proposals together, and without breaking confidentiality, can assist in all parties working together to bring about a satisfactory conclusion. We fully expect that there will be further exciting news to report with regard to this site in a future edition of **The Wharfinger** ...

■ **DRP**

*An Invitation ...
Sit back and relax, enjoy a good meal
in excellent surroundings, and listen to
our guest after dinner speaker ...*

Christmas Dinner '97

Preliminary details on page 12



CORPORATE
IWA
MEMBER

British
Marine
INDUSTRIES
FEDERATION

MICHAEL STIMPSON and ASSOCIATES

*Corporate Members of the
Herefordshire & Gloucestershire
Canal Trust, and IWA*

INSURANCE

What will the name on your
renewal notice be this year?
Why not find out what the only
company to specialise in

INSURANCE FOR THE INLAND WATERWAYS
for the last 19 years can offer you!

Our range of policies include:-

- * PERSONAL EFFECTS COVER AT
NORMAL PREMIUM RATE
- * NO EXCESS ON THIRD PARTY CLAIMS
- * SEMI-PROTECTED NO
CLAIMS DISCOUNT
- * UP TO 40% NO CLAIMS DISCOUNT
- * COVER WITH A MAJOR BRITISH
INSURANCE COMPANY
- * RESIDENTIAL AND COMMERCIAL USE
- * WIDE LEGAL PROTECTION COVER
- * FITTING OUT RISKS
- * NO SURVEY ON OLDER CRAFT
IF C OF C IN FORCE

IWA MEMBERS DISCOUNT POLICY

If you want to choose the cover
you want for your boat then

Perhaps we should be talking!

why not ring us now

**6 Norfolk Road,
Rickmansworth, Herts.
WD3 1QE**

Tel: (01923) 770425 & 770255
FAX: 721559



LEFT: The site for the Bailey Bridge over the Ell Brook aqueduct.
 ABOVE: The very first piece of the massive jigsaw is put in place.
 BELOW: The Bridge starts to come together - helped by 3 excavators, a forklift truck and 8 volunteers.



Our New Chairman

As reported elsewhere in The Wharfinger we were pleased to introduce the Trust's new Chairman, Bryan Heatley, to those present at the AGM. He has a wealth of contacts and following a request from your editors has penned the following introduction to himself:-

Born in Liverpool in 1934 with a career in finance and 30 years in army (National Service and TA). Lifelong transport enthusiast having gone through many phases including railways, trams, buses, aviation, motor cars and now canals. Owner of a classic sports car. Active in aircraft preservation from early 1960's.

Chairman of The Transport Trust, the national charity for

the preservation of Britain's transport heritage, since 1991. The Transport Trust has administered a number of restoration award schemes, the best known of which is the Scania Transport Trust Awards. A current project is the establishment of Heritage Skills Workshops at various centres in England and Wales.

Since retirement has undertaken assignments with charities in Fiji, South Africa and Cambodia. Recently attended a Birmingham University extra mural course on canal history. Has researched a planned canal which was intended to link the Leominster and the Montgomeryshire but was never built. Now living in Ludlow.

**on track
CONTROLS**

ONTRACK CONTROLS LTD

Tel & fax: 01981 540 781

OUR LATEST RANGE OF HANDHELD AND MAINS POWER MODEL RAILWAY CONTROLLERS FOR N, OO AND MOST SMALL GAUGE LAYOUTS FEATURE:

EXCELLENT SLOW RUNNING; EXCLUSIVE CENTRE-OFF CONTROL; FULL SELF-RESETTING OVERLOAD PROTECTION; LATEST TECHNOLOGY; MONEY-BACK GUARANTEE; PRECISION CONTROLLING; FREE POST & PACKING... AND MUCH, MUCH MORE.

SPECIAL OFFER FOR TRUST MEMBERS

FREE AN ONTRACK CONTROLS HH2 HANDHELD POWER CONTROLLER AT £14.95 WITH EVERY MPC3 DUAL CONTROLLER PURCHASED*

*(while stocks last)

- | | | |
|--------|--|--------|
| • MPC1 | ENTRY LEVEL [ideal for sidings] | £29.95 |
| • MPC2 | SINGLE POWER CONTROLLER | £34.95 |
| • MPC3 | DUAL POWER CONTROLLER | £49.95 |
| • HH1 | HANDHELD CONTROLLER FOR MPC2/MT1 | £22.95 |
| • HH2 | HANDHELD CONTROLLER EXCLUSIVELY FOR MPC3 | £14.95 |
| • MT1 | MAINS ADAPTOR FOR HH1 | £27.95 |



SUPPLIED EXCLUSIVELY BY:

ALL Components

PO Box 94

Hereford HR2 8YN



We also supply a full range of wire, switches, fuses, connectors, cables, LED's solder/irons etc. Quantity discounts and advice freely available. Special and Trade orders welcome. 2x1st stamps for catalogues & price lists please. CHEQUES: ALL Components. Visa & Mastercard welcome. Trust Members: Andy and Lesley Lowe.

Committee Matters

Four Council of Management meetings are reviewed by our Editor in order that our Members and supporters are kept up to date ...

MARCH COMMITTEE

■ Peter Moore had taken over as Chairman of the Special Projects Group; Steve Gittings had been persuaded to be Secretary of SPG - both appointments were welcomed. Options relating to work at Lock Cottage were discussed and a strategy agreed.

■ Negotiations were taking place to increase the number of Vice Presidents.

■ Thanks were expressed to Mrs Elizabeth Lloyd for her excellent publicity in respect of Social Events.

■ Cliff and David Penny reported that they would shortly be forming a specialist Town and Country Planning and Environmental Consultancy with an emphasis on Civil Engineering. It was unlikely they would be able to commit as much voluntary time to the Canal Trust as they would have liked. Reference was made to the extensive work undertaken by David in Chairing the Local Authority Steering Committee. The Council of Management recognised the need for the planned employment of the independent Consulting Engineers Messrs. Parkman to be properly managed and reiterated the need for a paid co-ordinator.

■ Linda Palmer indicated that she would be standing down

from the Council of Management, in all respects, at the AGM due to other pressures on her time.

■ A possible replacement Chairman had been given a guided tour of the Canal and would sit in on the next meeting.

■ The Trading Company reported that a new Centre Manager meant that new policies were being introduced and we were unable to have a display at Maylords Orchards Shopping Centre, Hereford, over the Easter period.

■ Discussions were still continuing with regard to a number of land issues in Hereford including the possible Compulsory Purchase of part of the line of the Canal by Hereford City Council and relating to two development sites.

APRIL COMMITTEE

■ Restoration Group reported excellent progress at Oxenhall. The Canal had been dug out between the Cottage and the Lane adjacent to the Coal Branch [*see photo. in last Edition - Ed.*], the towpath roughly levelled and much rubbish removed. Work was progressing well with the rebuilding of the (Listed Building!) outside loo.

■ Following a request from the landowner of our spoil

Committee Matters . . . (ii)

spreading site alongside the Canal in Gloucestershire, it had been levelled (to his satisfaction) at short notice to permit crops to be sown.

■ A Listed Building Application had been submitted to the Forest of Dean District Council for the repairs/re-building of Oxenhall House Lock. Negotiations were continuing with regard to permission to extend part of the Council Yard for use by the Canal Trust.

■ Arrangements for the AGM were discussed. It was reported, with great pleasure, that Viscount Portman had agreed to become a Vice President and Bryan Heatley was to be our new Chairman [see p.6].

■ Negotiations were ongoing regarding the appointment of independent Consulting Engineers for the feasibility and other studies. Five had been invited to tender and three firms were short-listed. Of these two were still under more detailed consideration. Supervision of the successful Tenderer was going to be difficult as the Steering Committee were reluctant to fund the reasonable expenses of a Trust volunteer. David Penny was thanked for bringing things this far.

■ Difficulties were being experienced with Malvern Hills District Council in respect of a number of Planning matters. This was regretted.

■ Questions relating to first aid training for restoration volunteers, health and safety and other regulatory matters were discussed.

MAY COMMITTEE

■ The final documents relating to the sale of some former railway land to the Canal Trust at Oxenhall had been received. A Planning Application would be made to demolish the former railway bridge abutments with a view to recovering stone to assist in restoring House Lock (the stone had originally been taken from Bottom Lock!).

■ Further discussions took place relating to work to be undertaken at, and in the vicinity of, Oxenhall Lock Cottage prior to sale.

■ Favourable negotiations with a major developer in Hereford were reported.

■ The Steering Committee had decided to eventually appoint Messrs Parkmans of Liverpool to undertake the feasibility and related studies along the whole of the Canal and Coal Branch. However, the formal appointment would be delayed by about three months to permit a further grant aid application to be determined. In the meantime some advance works were likely.

■ Bryan Heatley, the new Chairman designate, outlined his likely approach to Chaining the Canal Trust. His aims would

Committee Matters . . . (iii)

be long rather than short-term. These could include improved image; increased membership; improved fund-raising including more support from Corporate members and industry; reinforcing approaches to Local Authorities; meeting landowners; being an ideas man! From the outset he would be doing a lot of listening.

■ Restoration Group were asked to introduce a system for identifying unserviceable plant and equipment following an incident involving dumper brakes. A request from Newent Town Council to hire one of our excavators was carefully considered but declined.

■ Mike Potts had masterminded a very successful visit to the Canal by a group from Kingdom Tours.

■ A section of the Canal at Monkhide was for sale together with a derelict barn.

JUNE COMMITTEE

■ Bryan Heatley was welcomed and formally elected as Chairman. All other Officers remained unchanged except that there was no immediate volunteer to take over the role of Trust Administrator following the forced resignation of Lesley Lowe due to ill health. Council of Management wished Lesley a speedy recovery and recorded their appreciation for her help over the past few years. Steve Gittings was also welcomed, having been co-opted. He had

agreed to take on a specific role as Health and Safety Officer.

■ Following considerable research it had been agreed to purchase a "Bailey" Bridge [*this particular version is actually an "Acrow" Bridge - Ed.*] for use at Oxenhall to Bridge the Ell Brook and permit plant access to/from the work site and our new base at the Council Yard. The highly subsidised cost of purchasing the bridge was to be the sponsored target for the West Country Branch of the Inland Waterways Association for 1997. The Bridge would be erected by Canal Trust volunteers under the supervision of a Territorial Army Staff Sergeant acting in a voluntary capacity. This was welcomed. [*Photos on pages 5, 11, and 17.*]

■ A Planning Application had been submitted for the Bridge and was due to be determined the day before erection!

■ Brian Fox reported that his database of land-owners was now 98% complete. He was thanked for his considerable efforts in achieving this.

■ Mike Potts reported a highly successful trip to Manchester - the first weekend tour organised on behalf of the Canal Trust - marred only by the fact that there were a number of vacant seats which, if filled, would have ensured an excellent surplus for Canal Trust funds. However, a small profit had been made and he paid particular tribute to Joyce Potts for the hard work in the detailed

Committee Matters . . . (iv)

organisation. Mike and Joyce were thanked for their significant efforts.

■ Due to pressure of work David Penny made it clear that he would have to stand down as Chairman of the Trading Company after the August National Waterways Festival at Henley. He felt that there was great scope for the right person to make considerable advances in the running of the organisation. The Council of Management

thanked David for his considerable efforts.

■ At Over, the proposed re-development of the Hospital site had gone to Appeal but, in the meantime, the developer had submitted a revised Planning Application. Subject to certain assurances with regard to the restoration of the Canal, and associated matters, the Canal Trust agreed to support the revised Planning Application. ■ CRP

Sale of Lock Cottage

As regular readers will know, the Council of Management of the Canal Trust have resolved to sell **Lock Cottage**, at **Oxenhall**. This will be subject to certain Covenants to ensure the satisfactory restoration of the Canal is not hindered in any way and that any future owner/occupier does nothing to interfere with the functioning of the Canal or towpath.

10% of the proceeds are required to be returned to the original owner of the Cottage, Lock and Canal [*Member Mr Robin Stiles*] who so generously donated this stretch of the Canal (and the

Cottage) to the Canal Trust. After the deduction of legal and other outgoings the balance will go into our Structures Fund. Although currently empty (!) this will fund restoration of House Lock (in front of the Cottage).

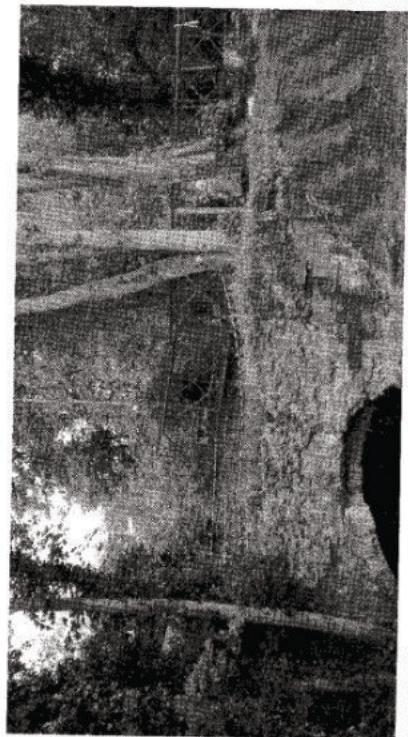
A number of people have expressed an interest in purchasing the property. Further details will appear in the next edition of **The Wharfinger** - the sale of the property will be in the Spring of 1998 and will be publicised in the national waterways press as well as in the local press (and **The Wharfinger!**).

Please Don't Bin It

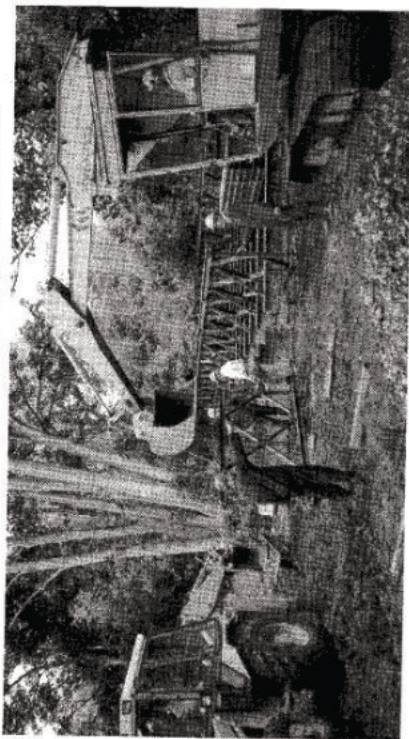
Please remember, don't throw your old copy of **The Wharfinger** in the bin. Unless you save them (*and we are flattered to hear that some do have the complete set!*) please give your old editions to your Dentist, Doctor or similar

professional. Hopefully, by lying on the waiting room table they will entice a new Member.

Alternatively, please pass on a copy to a relative, neighbour or work colleague. Every Member can help to spread the word!



*LEFT: The Bridge slowly advances above the dilapidated aqueduct.
RIGHT & BELOW: The last section is placed in position, together with stacks of decking on the Bridge to act as counterweights, before the last push.*



Dates For Your Diary

Sunday, 7th September

Oxenhall Open Day - come and see the progress
Teas and guided walks - from 10am to 4pm

Social evenings are held on the 3rd Tuesday of every month at the
Acorn Suite of the Royal Oak Hotel, The Southend, Ledbury.

Organised by Steve Delacourt-Smith

All meetings are 7.30 for 8pm.

Tuesday, 16th September

Our annual wildlife night - "Dragonflies"

Paul Halliday will give what promises to
be a fascinating illustrated talk.

Tuesday, 21st October

*"The Leominster Canal & its proposed
link with the Montgomery Canal"*

Our new Chairman, Bryan Heatley, talks about another
Canal - as well as his work for The Transport Trust.

Tuesday, 18th November

Unfortunately our planned speaker has had to cancel,
we promise that we will have a guest speaker so
why not come along for a surprise evening?

Tuesday, 16th December

"Canal Restoration in the 21st Century"

The year promises to go out with a bang - as
sometimes controversial, nationally known canal enthusiast
Michael Handford, has agreed to take us into the future!

Just as we were going to press we heard the unexpected news that
Andy Riga, the owner of the Royal Oak, had sold! However, his past
co-operation and assistance for the Canal Trust is reflected in the fact
that he had already negotiated the continuance of our Social Evenings
with the new owner - more news next time. In the meantime we thank
Andy, most sincerely, for his generous support for our voluntary work
and wish him many happy hours of fishing!

Members and non-members welcome. There will be a raffle, and plenty of time
for a chat. These Social Events also provide a time and place for the
dissemination of the latest news from the Trust. Please contact Steve if you
have any queries, or ideas for Social Events [01452 501372].

Friday, 5th December - Christmas Dinner '97

With guest speaker Tim Coghlan of Braunston Marina
At the Barn House, New Street Ledbury, full details ring (01432) 820420
One of our guests comes from Farnborough each year - it must be good!

Letters to the Editor

[Whilst we welcome letters on any topic relating to our work and the Inland Waterways System any opinions expressed do not represent the policy of the Canal Trust unless specifically stated.]

Dear Editor,

The article by Brian Fox [*"The Key to the Lock" p.6 to 8 of the Spring edition of The Wharfinger*] was very interesting. What has always puzzled me about that picture, was not the Lock at the top, but the Canal at the bottom.

I have tried to take a photograph from the same position as the original, and have wondered why the Canal was so wide there, and so narrow where I was, and where was No. 2 Lock, as I had to stand on the remains of No. 2 Lock, in order to take the same picture.

But if it is Rudford Lock, could someone take a photograph from the same position as the original, might not the same tree be still on the left, or the gate in the hedge on the right? As for Alfred Watkins [*the original photographer*], unless he could walk on water, he must have got his feet wet that day in 1880!

Michael Jones, Malvern

Dear Editor,

"Walk in the sun this winter on the Costa Blanca" said the print on the reverse of the colour postcard...

I have distributed a copy of **The Wharfinger** amongst the congregation of the Anglican Chaplaincy for the Costa Blanca. One never knows what bread one is casting on the waters.

So you can literally say you have local, national and international distribution!

Keith Hill, on extended holiday

Dear Editor,

I was interested to see the article in my name on the Coal Branch in the last edition of **The Wharfinger**, and more than a little surprised to read that it was originally published in "English Life in the Nineteenth Century". This is certainly news to me, and I would like to see a copy.

All of the events, much of the material (word for word) clearly derives from "The Hereford and Gloucester Canal". Those interested in the Newent Coalfield will find more about it in my "The Mines of Newent and Ross"; although out of print it is available in local libraries.

Incidentally, Brian Fox did a good piece of detective work regarding the photo on the front cover of "The Hereford and Gloucester Canal". He is quite correct, I made a mistake. But at least it has taken nearly 20 years for the error to be spotted! And it does make a very good picture.

David Bick, Newent

THE HEREFORD AND GLOUCESTER CANAL by Member David Bick

Why not treat yourself - or it makes an ideal gift?

104 pages, A5 format, with over 30 photographs, plus numerous maps and other documents. Please send a cheque for £7.95 (inc. P&P), payable to H&GCS, to:-

*H&GCS, "Little Lugg",
CROSS KEYS, HEREFORD,
HR1 3NP.*

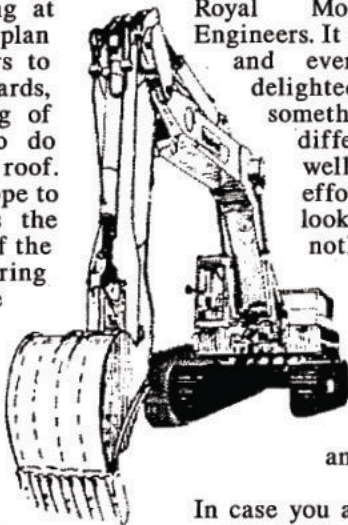
RESTORATION UPDATE

By Brian Fox

Last August the Canal Trust acquired Oxenhall Lock Cottage together with two locks an aqueduct and about 1/4 mile of Canal. Now the Cottage is being prepared for sale in the spring - it is taking longer than planned to get it ready but we are told that the work we have done to it (and around it) in the meantime has probably increased its value by about £10,000, so it should be worth the delay. Thanks must go to the Special Projects Group who have been meeting at least once a month to plan everything from repairs to broken floor boards, repointing and relaying of brickwork, to what to do with a bees nest in the roof. The money which we hope to make will go towards the repairs and rebuilding of the locks and aqueduct. During the last few weeks there has been feverish activity in getting it ready for the big moment. The brick outhouse has been totally rebuilt including a door which came from Steve Delacourt's kitchen! Fencing has been erected defining the boundaries and is being painted and the garden has a few inches of extra fertile canal bed silt to give it a good start. There was even enough fencing left to put some around the spill-weir. A telephone duct has been laid down the towpath which will now be covered with stone to make a hard access road to the cottage. We already have a number of people who have approached us expressing their interest in buying the property

so we hope there will be queues of potential buyers knocking on the estate agent's door as soon as word gets out in the spring. [see p.10]

Perhaps the biggest event of the last quarter was the erection of a Bailey Bridge. How many people can say that they have helped to build one - not many I reckon. Well, the Canal Trust now own their own Bridge and were guided in the construction by Staff Sergeant Steve Lambert of the Royal Monmouthshire Royal Engineers. It only took one weekend and everyone involved was delighted to be doing something so completely different and went home well pleased with their efforts. As it stands it may look like a bridge over nothing as the aqueduct is only about 3 feet below but it was actually built according to the army manual as if there was only the brook 20 feet below and no way across.



In case you are wondering why we need a Bailey Bridge perhaps I had better explain. The aqueduct which took the Canal over the Ell Brook is still standing but has been unsafe for some time now and the Council even erected a footbridge over to carry pedestrians who used the footpath. It was clearly unsafe for any vehicles to cross and we had the problem of how to get from our new compound on Horsefair Lane to the Cottage and Lock with materials and also to transport silt from the Canal to a local farmers field. A bridge seemed the only way and

RESTORATION UPDATE... continued

eventually one was secured for a knock down price (do we ever pay full price?) and will remain until the aqueduct itself is rebuilt and strengthened in a few years time.

Preparations are now well under way for our August work camp when about 25 volunteers from Waterway Recovery Group will be descending on Oxenhall to help with the restoration of the lock and, no doubt, making their mark in the local hostelrys. We offered them the chance to sleep in the hall at Oxenhall which is immediately adjacent to the job and in a pleasant rather isolated rural location, but they have opted for staying at Dymock Village Hall which is about 3 miles from the site and next door to a noisy pub! It doesn't look like they will be taking advantage of the long summer evenings to do extra

work on the Lock!! The local volunteers will also be around to show the flag so read the next edition of **The Wharfinger** for pictures and a full report of all the activities.

The Lock which we are rebuilding is a Listed Structure and consequently any alterations need planning approval and will have to be done in a manner which best conforms to how the structure originally looked. We have the permission, now all we need is some stone to match the original. Some of it was found in the bottom of the lock where it had fallen but much of it has crumbled away and needs renewing.

New stone is very expensive but we are in luck again and have just come into the possession of some in the form of an abutment - which formed

RDD Insurance Brokers

Moulsham Mill Centre, Parkway,

Chelmsford, Essex, CM2 7PX

All Industrial and Commercial Insurance transacted.

Specialists in :- Motor Trade

Charities

Hotels

Schools

Retail

Nursing Homes

Engineering

Printers/Publishers

We guarantee a professional, independent and personal service on all Insurance matters without obligation.

For a free consultation call us today on :-

Tel (01245) 252414

Fax (01245) 346802

RESTORATION UPDATE... continued

part of the railway bridge across the Ell Brook - included in the land recently purchased from British Rail.

It has been recorded that the old locks were demolished to provide stone for new bridges when the railway was built and indeed we have already found stone blocks during demolition which have clearly been used previously in a lock so we will simply be returning the stone from whence it came! The compound which Gloucester County have loaned us on Horsefair Lane is now securely fenced on three sides and we have acquired (this is one of our Treasurer's favourite words) ample fence posts to complete the job when we can fit it in amongst all the other jobs. The trouble with being a volunteer work force is that

things don't get done when we would like as there isn't always the time or manpower, and another job will come along which carries a higher priority. Most of our equipment will be stored there eventually but for the moment it is scattered around Herefordshire & Gloucestershire in field corners and peoples gardens.

As you can see we are desperately in need of more volunteers to take on the growing number of jobs so please don't hesitate to contact one of our team if you feel you have a few hours to spare either at the weekend, or during the week if you are retired. Training can be given in driving plant, laying of bricks etc and as long as you are over 16 (*an insurance requirement - Ed.*) you will be more than welcome.

WANT TO GET INVOLVED ?

As reported above we are now working on the Oxenhall Locks Project Site virtually every weekend and several other days/evenings each month. There is a vast range of work to undertake from bricklaying to being trained to drive our plant; from demolition (with care!) to gardening (to make the Cottage and its approach look its best before going on the market). This has been a site where we have made such rapid progress - don't you want to be part of it?

To volunteer to assist in our restoration (*and maintenance*) work please telephone:

Steve Delacourt-Smith (01452) 50372

Brian Fox (01432) 358628

Simon Hayward (01452) 534232

Tom Bennett (01981) 500258

DISCOVER BRITAIN'S SECRET WORLD!



Come canal cruising!

Enjoy our beautiful countryside the peaceful, relaxed way. No experience required - tuition included. Family and group boats, luxury to economy classes. Trad-style boats with boatman's cabins. 5 well known routes, including the Llangollen Canal.

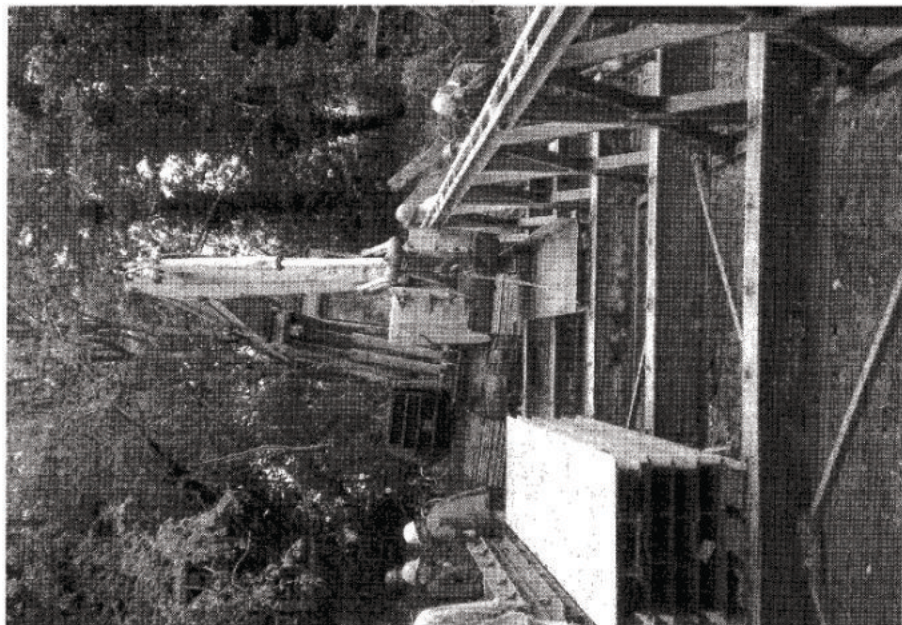
Brochure from:-

MIDDLEWICH NARROWBOATS

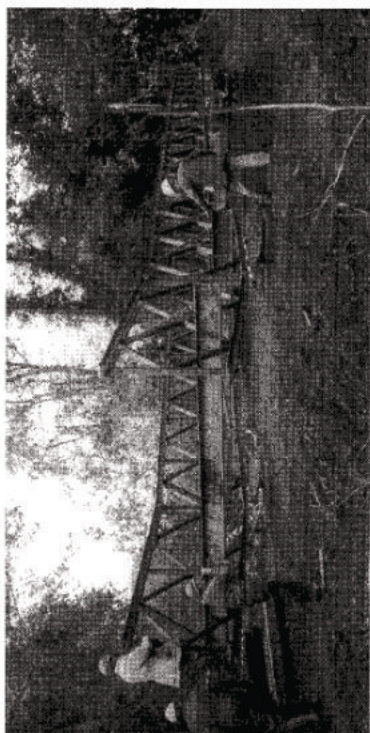
CANAL TERRACE

MIDDLEWICH, CHESHIRE,

CW10 9BD Tel: 01606 832460



ABOVE: The last cross-beam is carefully lowered into position.
 BELOW: The Bridge reaches the far side - 3 more bays of "launch nose" to come beyond the rollers. These are removed to leave a 5 bay Bridge.
 RIGHT: The first section of decking is put into position.



50 Editions On . . .

We continue our review of the earlier Editions of **The Wharfinger**. [Editions 1-34 were covered in Editions 50, 51 and 54.]

Edition 35, in the Summer of 1992, was the first edition of **The Wharfinger** to be published in the name of **The Herefordshire and Gloucestershire Canal Trust** following the successful launch at that years AGM - "... a Charitable Trust that can be seen to be capable of succeeding" said the Chairman. It was reported that three members of the Council of Management had met with the Department of Transport and their Consulting Engineers, Messrs Parkman [a name that also appears on page 1 - Ed.], to discuss the major impact of the (since thankfully shelved) proposed A40 Link Road in the Newent area. Arrangements were in hand for an Open Weekend at Monkhide - the site of the main Herefordshire restoration activity at that time. **The Wharfinger** was on sale in some shops for the first time.

"The Restoration Group have just received approval for a 6 month budget that, two years ago, would have lasted 6 years" said the Editorial of the Autumn edition in 1992 - number 36. A successful and mutually informative first meeting had taken place with the (then) Gloucestershire Nature Trust [there have been a number of equally successful meetings

since]. Extensive weed in the Canal had almost scuppered the Open Weekend at Monkhide; a specialist weed-cutting boat "recently seen on the 'Tomorrow's World' television programme" had saved the day! Photographs showed the Mayor of Hereford passing by boat under Skew Bridge - a large photograph of which also graced the pages of **The Hereford Times**. Life Membership rates were introduced.

Edition 37 - the Winter edition - announced the recruitment of the 500th Member [now standing at over 750 - Ed.].

"a 6 month Budget that, 2 years ago would have lasted 6 years."

Another of the articles expressed continuing concern for the condition of **Lock Cottage at Oxenhall**. An amusing account of one of our major Canal Camps graphically described (yet another) very wet 10 days! The (then) very poorly worded Policy, relating to the Canal, in the Forest of Dean Local Plan was reported and Members were urged to write and protest [the outcome exceeded our highest expectations and led to very significant changes]. The same edition carried the news that **Midlands Electricity** were to sponsor printing of **The Wharfinger** for a second year and carried a story where the Chairman was described as "Just Like a Mars Bar".

The Spring of 1993 saw edition 38 published. A formal objection had been raised to a golf course on the line of the Canal

50 Editions On ... continued

near to Dymock and the Gloucestershire County Archaeologist had supported the Canal Trust's concerns. Restoration was progressing very well in Gloucestershire and the "first Sunday of the month" working party was rapidly becoming the first **weekend** of each month - and more! Our **Grand Holiday Draw** had included a prize, donated by the **British Marine Industries Federation**, of a night in a top London Hotel plus VIP tickets to the **London International Boat Show** that January. However, of the thousands of tickets sold, it had been won by a supporter who lived close to London and he already received complimentary tickets to the Show due to the nature of his employment! However, **The Wharfinger** told the story of our Chairman who had persuaded BBC local radio to let him run a 'phone-in auction, on Christmas Eve, which secured another £120 towards our funds and gained valuable publicity for our Sponsors/the Canal Trust.

It took until edition 39 (Summer 1993) for the **Hereford Bypass** decision to be released by the **Secretary of State** [see review of editions 31/32 on p.20 of the last edition] finding positively in favour of the Canal Trust. If the scheme proceeded to the east of Hereford (where it would have blocked the line of the Canal) provision would be made for the Canal and towpath to pass under the new road as part of the

“
a very successful
preliminary
meeting regarding
the line of the
canal at Over...”

Bypass proposals. In reporting this success it was stressed that the Canal Trust had not objected to the principle of the Bypass - "we were neutral to the campaigns for and against" - our objection had been to the complete lack of provision to enable the Canal to be restored. **Herefordshire Nature Trust** had inspected a proposed restoration site in Herefordshire and approved of our prior liaison. A Section 106 Planning Agreement would be used by **Forest of Dean District Council** to secure the line of the Canal where it had been threatened by the golf course near Dymock. There had been a highly successful preliminary meeting with an Agent who was representing the **Gloucestershire Regional Health Authority**, and Officers from the **Tewkesbury Borough Council Planning Department**, with the Canal Trust regarding the line of the Canal (and the former **Lock Keepers Cottage**), in the grounds of [what is now the former] **Over Hospital**.

Edition 40, in the Autumn of 1993, started with a plea for money [some things don't change!]. There had been compliments about the standard of our Grant-Aid bids but no significant sums had been forthcoming - until the largest ever single grant, of £4,400 from the **Civic Trust Local Projects Fund**. Ironically, this was supported by the **Department of the Environment** - with whom we had just been "doing battle"

over the Hereford Bypass! The money, matched with our own hard won funds, was to go towards a tracked 360° excavator. There was then a review of more local grants with the heart-felt comment - *"... to be honest, the amounts from the Local Authorities are exceedingly disappointing when you read of the annual multi-thousand pound support that a number of other Canal Trusts receive from their Local Authorities"* - a spirited Editorial! It was reported that the Forest of Dean District Council had been inundated with objections to their [then] weakly worded Local Plan Policy in respect of the Canal. However, there was still great concern at the wording of the formal Deposit Version. The previous wording, that the line of the Canal would be protected 'where feasible', had changed to 'where possible' - leaving the door wide open for Developers to argue against the restoration of the Canal. Members were again urged to write and object in an article headed *"Two Words Destroy the Future"*. *"Please don't assume that your letter won't count, or that others will write - every letter of support is of immense value in showing that the Herefordshire and Gloucestershire canal is a major asset to the community that fully warrants a clear and supportive main Policy..."* urged the Editorial in true campaigning fashion. A 16 day Canal Camp at Yarkhill was

planned, working towards Barrs Lock and it was reported that we had visits planned by volunteers from The Prince's Trust and the RAF. Meanwhile, in Gloucestershire, new brick towpath walls were taking shape below Cold Harbour Lane Bridge and a structural survey of the Lock Keepers Cottage at Over Hospital was to be commissioned by the Regional Health Authority. Meanwhile, Forest of Dean District Council had refused Planning Permission in respect of a proposed permanent Gypsy site on the line of the Canal at Rudford. Vandalism continued to be a concern at Yarkhill.

"the Council had been inundated with letters objecting to the wording"

The Forest of Dean District Council had been inundated with letters, objecting to the proposals for their Local Plan Policy relating to the Canal, according to the Winter edition of The Wharfinger (edition 41). Senior Officers of the Council had promised to discuss the wording with the Chairman. *"When we succeed in gaining full protection for the whole 34 miles (including essential diversion routes) you can justly claim to have played a vital part in securing the future of the Canal for the benefit of the local community, future generations, and the national waterways network"* the report concluded. The MEB's print Sponsorship was nearing an end and a plea [still unanswered - Ed.] was made for a new print Sponsor. Photographs, and two

50 Editions On ... continued

articles, recorded the significant progress that had been made at Yarkhill during the long Canal Camp - inspite of the (usual!) rain. Our Sales and Promotion Stand had a successful attendance at the August National Waterways Festival which had been in Peterborough.

Edition 42, Spring 1994, reported that *"Rumpus over Canal Policy was the front page banner headline carried by the Gloucester Citizen"*. This was because the Forest of Dean District Council had received just over 1,000 formal letters of objection to their Local Plan - of which nearly 450 related to just one topic - the Canal! Council Officers stressed that there really were not so many objections to the Local Plan - as long as the Policy relating to the Canal could be resolved [which it was - and the Canal Trust did not even have to formally attend the Public Inquiry into the Local Plan - it should be noted that we now enjoy an excellent relationship with this Council - Ed.]. Senior Officers and Councillors from the Gloucestershire County Council, and Forest of Dean District Council, had attended a very successful informal inspection of our work at

Oxenhall in the vicinity of Cold Harbour Lane Bridge. The Gloucestershire Regional Health Authority had submitted a very detailed document to Tewkesbury Borough Council regarding the re-development of the Over Hospital Site - it contained many favourable references to the Canal and Cottage, both of which would be retained. At exceedingly short notice the Canal Trust had been invited to make a presentation to the Gloucestershire County Council regarding the adverse impact that the [then] proposed A40 Link Road would have on the Canal in the Newent area. The County Council resolved to oppose the road - one of the five reasons being the adverse effect on the Canal. With only 48 hours notice the Chairman had successfully secured the deferral of a Planning Application that would have obstructed an essential diversion route for the Canal in Hereford. The Trading Company were negotiating to run our trip boat at the Welsh National Eisteddfod, on the Neath and Tennant Canal. David Bick was revising his book about the Canal and his intention to include a Chapter about the work of the Canal Trust was welcomed.

TO BE CONCLUDED...

CRP

BACK ISSUES FOR SALE

We have a very limited number of back issues of *The Wharfinger* for sale (some of the earlier issues are photo-copies):-

Editions 1 to 10; 11 to 20 } Each set of 10 £5 + p+p*
21 to 30; and 31 to 40 } *p+p £1.50 set, max. £3 per order

Editions 41 to date, available individually at 50p a copy inc. p+p.
H&GCS, "Little Lugg", CROSS KEYS, HEREFORD, HR1 3NP

"The first 10 were fascinating - please send me the next 10 ASAP."

Thank You . . .

To Braunston Boat Show for £1,000 towards our work at Oxenhall from the proceeds of the event this May. Special thanks to Tim Coghlan, the proprietor of Braunston Marina; Tim is our guest after dinner speaker at this years Christmas Dinner on Friday 5th December - preliminary details on p.12. [*cheque presentation photo. p.23 (and didn't our stand look good? - Ed.)*]

The IWA's London Branch have donated £750 towards the work at Oxenhall - we particularly appreciate this as we understand that only three other organisations in the whole country have shared in their allocation of funds this year - *thank you.*

As our series "50 Editions On" (pages 18-21 of this edition) illustrates we had a long and hard

battle with Forest of Dean District Council over their Local Plan. However, as we stress on p.21, we now enjoy an excellent relationship with the Council - and this is reflected in the fact that they have donated £1,000 towards the remedial works to the culverts, weir and our famous (Listed Building) outside loo! In addition, the Council have made a grant of £2,000 towards our work on House Lock. The Council of Management of the Canal Trust greatly appreciate these gestures of ongoing support from the Officers and Members of the Forest of Dean District Council.

Gloucestershire County Council have made available a significant part of the Newent Horsefair Lane Depot for our use as a plant, equipment and materials base during our work at Oxenhall - this is greatly appreciated.



"PUT THE CLOCK BACK"

*When in Ross-on-Wye
visit our shop in*

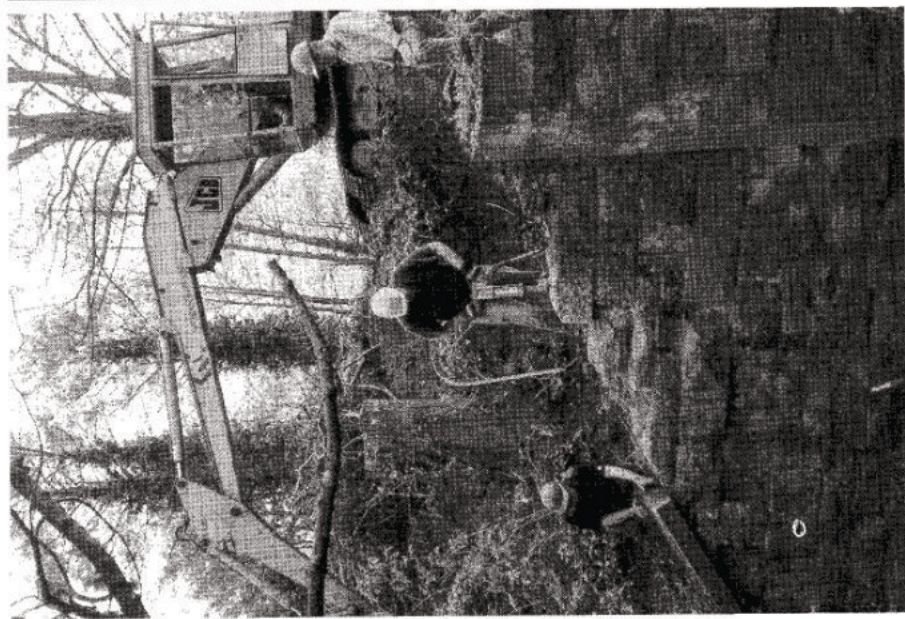


PALMA COURT ARCADE,
27, BROOKEND STREET,
ROSS-ON-WYE, HR9 7EE

*for Postcards, Postmarks, Cigarette Cards
odds & sets, Accessories, Frames*

Open Tuesday to Saturday inclusive
10am. - 5pm.

Home telephone:- (01989) 768750



LEFT: Starting to recover stone from our railway abutment for use in House Lock.
 ABOVE: Helen Lines puts the finishing touches to the fence around the weir.
 BELOW: £1,000 from Braunston Boat Show (see p.22) - Ray and Barbara Moses helped man the stand.



The Last Page

Have you ever thought that, one day, you might just like to do something different? Something where you would have no worries about the pay or National Insurance contributions, no payments to be made towards a pension and no income tax liabilities? Too good to be true? Well, we have to be honest and say that the reason that there are no worries about pay (*and all the nasty things that go with it like tax and other deductions*) is because there isn't any ...! BUT PLEASE don't lose interest now - we have something to offer that has far more rewards than simply money in your pocket.

The opportunity has arisen for someone to lead the team that raises the funds for the Canal Trust - Herefordshire and Gloucestershire Canal (Sales) Limited is seeking a new Chairman to take over from David Penny when he steps down in early September.

The successful person will be responsible for deciding which events to attend, achieving the best pitches and generally ensuring that our attendance at every event - locally and nationally - runs smoothly and successfully. The new Chairman will lead an existing enthusiastic team of volunteers and will be responsible for recruiting additional volunteers. He (or she!) will strive to maintain and improve standards whilst generating increased sources of

funding for the restoration of the Canal. An important, and equally rewarding aspect, is the promotion of the voluntary work and achievements of the Canal Trust in an effective and professional manner.

The right candidate, *spending just a few hours per week on average*, will readily create the potential for significant improvements in the trading achievements whilst gaining immense personal and job satisfaction.

Reasonable out of pocket expenditure will be reimbursed and the existing team is ready and waiting to work with the new Chairman to attain even greater goals than before!

David Penny or Liz Connors will be more than happy to talk to any prospective applicant - please don't assume that someone else will take up the challenge - *just think of what you might help us to achieve.*

Interested? Please write [*by 25th September*] to the Trading Company, Liz Connors, 18, St. Ethelbert Close, Sutton St. Nicholas, Hereford, HR1 3BF giving brief personal details and stating why you consider you have the qualities and drive necessary to maximise the potential of our volunteers. We promise that all applications will be acknowledged and advised of the outcome.

COPY DEADLINE FOR THE NEXT EDITION IS SATURDAY, 4th OCTOBER

Printed by Print Plus, 126 Widemarsh Street, Hereford, HR4 9HN (01432) 272025
The Wharfinger was compiled by David and Cliff Penny using *JetSetter* British software.

CONTACTS

Bryan Heatley,

St. Julians, Park Road,
Ludford, LUDLOW,
Shropshire, SY8 1PJ
Tel/Fax:- (01584) 877424,

Brian Fox,

1, Holmer Hall Cottages,
Roman Road,
HEREFORD, HR4 9QU
Tel:- (01432) 358628

Steve Delacourt-Smith

172, Stroud Road,
GLOUCESTER, GL1 5JX
Tel:- (01452) 501372

Tom Bennett,

Bannut Tree, Lower House,
STAUNTON-ON-WYE,
Herefordshire, HR4 7ND
Tel:- (01981) 500258

Liz Connors,

18, St. Ethelbert Close,
SUTTON St. NICHOLAS,
Hereford, HR1 3BF
Tel/Fax:- (01432) 880155

Cliff Penny/David Penny,

"Coppice", BURLEY GATE,
Hereford, HR1 3QS
Tel:- (01432) 820420

Mike & Joyce Potts,

No. 8 The Dovecote,
MANSELL LACY,
Hereford, HR4 7HQ
Tel:- (01981) 590372

Nigel Jefferies,

Tel:- (01432) 850661

WANT TO HELP ?

**PLEASE CONTACT ANYONE
ON THIS PAGE
T O D A Y !**

Penny & George Shetliffe,

Mail Order Sales,
Little Lugg,
CROSS KEYS,
Hereford, HR1 3NP
Tel:- (01432) 820623

Steve Hughes,

Exhibitions,
62 Northend Lane,
Madresfield, MALVERN,
Worcestershire, WR14 2EX
Tel:- (01684) 892428

Dick Skeet, Tel:- (01568) 797032

Unless specifically stated any opinions expressed in this newsletter are those of the author and do not necessarily reflect the formal policy of the Herefordshire and Gloucestershire Canal Trust. The Trust accepts no liability for any matter printed in this newsletter nor for any advertising that may be included. Reproduction of extracts from the newsletter is welcomed provided that full acknowledgement is given.

Membership records are computerised. In accordance with the Data Protection Act 1984 [Licence No. A3099046], your entry is available for inspection if you send a SAE to the Membership Secretary.

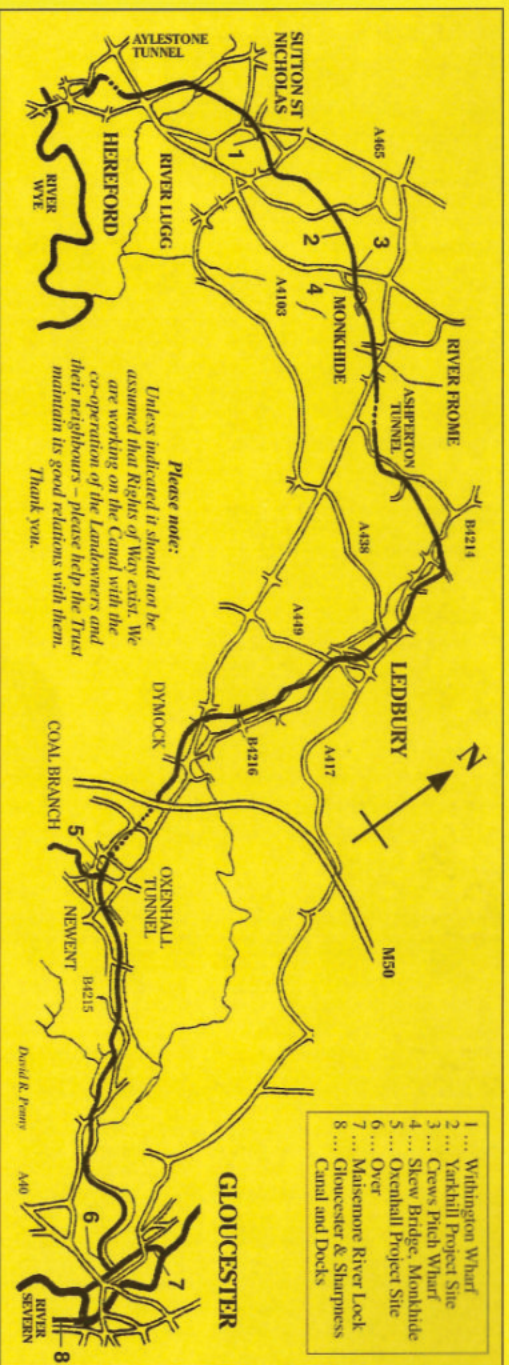
Whilst we try to ensure dates are correct please verify them with a relevant Organiser.

©1997 Published by the Herefordshire and Gloucestershire Canal Trust.

ALL MEMBERSHIP CORRESPONDENCE TO:- (sae please)
H & G CANAL TRUST, 6 Castle Street, Hereford, HR1 2NL

The Herefordshire and Gloucestershire Canal Trust is a non-profit distributing Company limited by guarantee [No.2704407], and is registered as a Charity [No.1010721]
H & G Canal (Sales) Ltd. is the Trust's wholly owned Trading Company [No.2710215]

THE HEREFORDSHIRE AND GLOUCESTERSHIRE CANAL



Work started in 1792 but was not completed until 1845, making this the last major route built in Britain, but for the navigations of Birmingham and the Manchester Ship Canal. The Canal stretched for 34 miles from the River Severn at Gloucester, via Newent, Dymock and Ledbury to the City of Hereford utilising some 22 locks and 3 tunnels. The Canal was formally closed in 1881 to allow construction of the Ledbury to Gloucester railway and this in its turn was closed by Dr Beeching in 1964.

The Canal Society was formed in 1983 and replaced in 1992 by the Herefordshire and Gloucestershire Canal Trust, a registered charity. The Trust has an ordinary and corporate membership exceeding 700 from all over the country – and abroad! Our objective is to fully restore the 34 mile Canal, from its connection with the 2,500 mile inland waterways network at Gloucester to the centre of Hereford. A Steering Committee of the Local Authorities, Environment Agency, etc. has been formed by the Trust to assist in progressing this objective. We have a major restoration site in each county, which together extend to some 3 miles.